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Income Declaration Rules May Change

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Family members of state officials may be allowed to avoid publishing their income declarations simply by filing a written refusal to do so with the authorities, Vedomosti reported Monday, citing a draft of the Finance Ministry's order.

President Dmitry Medvedev has ordered officials and their families to disclose their incomes in a bid to fight corruption but did not introduce any penalties for not complying.

Medvedev's order allows relatives to withhold the required information for unspecified "objective causes," Vedomosti said, adding that a refusal would now be considered a valid cause.

Analysts said the change, which has not been enacted, would allow corrupt officials to conceal illegal income by listing family members as owners of property obtained through dubious means — a widespread practice that Medvedev had sought to end with his order.

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